

SO YOU WANT TO BE A CITIZEN?

TEACHER INFORMATION

Every person who wants to become a citizen of the United States has to take a Naturalization Exam as a part of the process. This exam includes questions that ask the applicant to demonstrate a basic knowledge of United States history and the structure of our government. These are things that all of us should know.

So how would the rest of us who are already citizens do on this test? There are at least 3 ways to answer that question:

- (1) Attached is the full text of the “100 Sample U.S. History and Government Questions That May Be Asked During the Naturalization Exam.”
- (2) Also attached is a shorter list of 25 of these multiple-choice questions. Or, if you really want to challenge your students, you can use the sheet that includes the questions but does not offer multiple-choice answers.
- (3) These questions, and much more information about citizenship and naturalization, are also available on the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) web site (<http://uscis.gov/graphics/service/natz/require.htm>). The questions can be answered as an interactive self-test.

(Note: The San Francisco Public Library web site offers the sample questions from the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services web site in a bilingual (English and Spanish) format (<http://sfpl.lib.ca.us/librarylocations/main/pracquest.htm>).

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TEACHER MATERIAL

CLASS ACTIVITY

1. The day before you have them take the Naturalization Exam, ask the class to list 10 things every person who wants to be a citizen of the United States should know about United States history and government. In other words, what questions would they think it important to include on the Naturalization Exam. You may want to give an example or two to get them pointed in the right direction. Ask for 2-3 volunteers (extra credit?) to: (1) make a list that includes every item listed, and; (2) rank the list by indicating how many students listed each item. Next day, have the students who assembled the list and ranking lead a discussion on the items listed. Which ones were ranked highest and why? Was the actual Naturalization Exam similar to or different from the list the class came up with? Is the Exam too hard, or too easy?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Is it important for persons who want to be citizens to know about U.S. history and government? Why?
2. Should the Naturalization Exam also include questions about other subjects, such as U.S. culture, art, literature, etc.? Why?
3. If there are 100 questions on the Exam, what number of correct answers should result in a passing score?
4. What makes a good citizen? Does demonstrating knowledge to pass an exam make you a good citizen? What about personal characteristics, values, actions in your community?
5. Is voting an important part of being a good citizen? Why?

25 SAMPLE
U.S. HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT
MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS
THAT MAY BE ASKED DURING THE
NATURALIZATION EXAM

1. HOW MANY REPRESENTATIVES ARE THERE IN CONGRESS?

- A. 100
- B. 50
- C. 435
- D. 102

2. WHAT ARE THE THREE BRANCHES OF OUR GOVERNMENT?

- A. Democratic, Republican, and Independent
- B. Department of Justice, Department of State, Department of Defense
- C. Legislative, Executive, Judicial
- D. Police, Education, Legislative

3. WHY ARE THERE 100 SENATORS IN THE SENATE?

- A. Because that is all that fits in the Senate Gallery
- B. Because it must have half the number of the Representatives
- C. Tradition
- D. 2 from each state

4. WHO WAS THE MAIN WRITER OF THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE?

- A. Bill Clinton
- B. George Washington
- C. Thomas Jefferson
- D. Abraham Lincoln

5. WHO WAS PRESIDENT DURING THE CIVIL WAR?

- A. Abraham Lincoln
- B. John F. Kennedy
- C. George Washington
- D. Thomas Jefferson

6. WHO IS THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF OF THE U.S. MILITARY?

- A. The Secretary of Defense
- B. The President
- C. The Secretary of State
- D. The Vice-President

7. WHAT IS THE SUPREME LAW OF THE UNITED STATES?

- A. The Declaration of Independence
- B. The Bill of Rights
- C. The Magna Carta
- D. The Constitution

8. WHO BECOMES THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES IF THE PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT SHOULD DIE?

- A. The Speaker of the House of Representatives
- B. The Senate Majority Leader
- C. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
- D. The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court

9. WHICH LIST CONTAINS THREE RIGHTS OR FREEDOMS GUARANTEED BY THE BILL OF RIGHTS?

- A. Right to life, Right to Liberty, Right to the Pursuit of Happiness
- B. Freedom of speech, Freedom of press, Freedom of religion
- C. Right to protest, Right to Protection under the law, Freedom of religion
- D. Freedom of religion, Right to elect representatives. Human rights.

10. HOW MANY SUPREME COURT JUSTICES ARE THERE?

- A. 10
- B. 9
- C. 3
- D. 13

11. WHAT IS THE PRIMARY DUTY OF CONGRESS?

- A. To execute laws
- B. To naturalize citizens
- C. To sign bills into law
- D. To make laws

12. WHAT IS THE BILL OF RIGHTS?

- A. The first part of the Declaration of Independence
- B. The first ten amendments of the Constitution
- C. The Preamble
- D. The Pledge of Allegiance

13. WHO ELECTS THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES?

- A. The Senate
- B. The Congress
- C. The Cabinet
- D. The electoral college

14. WHICH OF THESE IS GUARANTEED BY THE FIRST AMENDMENT?

- A. Freedom of press
- B. Right to Bear arms
- C. Right to trial by jury in most cases
- D. Right to happiness

15. WHICH PRESIDENT IS CALLED THE “FATHER OF OUR COUNTRY”?

- A. Abraham Lincoln
- B. Thomas Jefferson
- C. Patrick Henry
- D. George Washington

16. WHOSE RIGHTS ARE GUARANTEED BY THE CONSTITUTION AND THE BILL OF RIGHTS?

- A. Everyone (citizens and non-citizens living in the U.S.)
- B. Registered voters
- C. The President
- D. Natural born citizens

17. WHO SIGNS BILLS INTO LAW?

- A. The Supreme Court
- B. The President
- C. Congress
- D. The Senate

18. WHAT ARE THE DUTIES OF THE SUPREME COURT?

- A. To serve the President as Cabinet members
- B. To write laws
- C. To interpret laws
- D. To execute laws

19. WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION DOES NOT ADDRESS OR GUARANTEE VOTING RIGHTS?

- A. 19th Amendment
- B. 24th Amendment
- C. 15th Amendment
- D. 7th Amendment

20. WHO HAS THE POWER TO DECLARE WAR?

- A. Congress
- B. The President
- C. Chief Justice of the Supreme Court
- D. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

21. WHAT DID THE EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION DO?

- A. Freed the Indians
- B. Ended the Civil War
- C. Freed many slaves
- D. Ended World War II

22. WHERE DOES FREEDOM OF SPEECH COME FROM?

- A. The Declaration of Independence
- B. Emancipation Proclamation
- C. The President
- D. The Bill of Rights

23. HOW MANY CHANGES OR AMENDMENTS ARE THERE TO THE CONSTITUTION?

- A. 10
- B. 27
- C. 13
- D. 9

24. WHO SELECTS THE SUPREME COURT JUSTICES?

- A. The electoral college
- B. The people
- C. They are appointed by the President
- D. The Senate

25. WHAT IS THE MINIMUM VOTING AGE IN THE UNITED STATES?

- A. 18
- B. 21
- C. 35
- D. 16

ANSWERS

1. (C) 435
2. (C) Legislative, Executive, Judicial
3. (D) Two from each state
4. (C) Thomas Jefferson
5. (A) Abraham Lincoln
6. (B) The President
7. (D) The Constitution
8. (A) The Speaker of the House of Representatives
9. (B) Speech, Press, Religion
10. (B) 9
11. (D) To make laws
12. (B) The first ten amendments of the Constitution
13. (D) The Electoral College
14. (A) Freedom of the press
15. (D) George Washington
16. (A) Everyone (Citizens and non-citizens living in the U.S.)
17. (B) The President
18. (C) To interpret laws
19. (D) 7th Amendment
20. (A) Congress
21. (C) Freed many slaves

- 22. (D) The Bill of Rights
- 23. (B) 27
- 24. (C) They are appointed by the President
- 25. (A) 18

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